

## **Responses from Conservancy Boards**

In connection with this report to the Legislature, the Office of Financial Management directed the Department of Ecology to solicit responses from water conservancy boards on their perspectives regarding the adequacy of technical support provided by the department. Following are the responses received by the Department of Ecology from 15 of 21 water conservancy boards. In addition, OFM called Benton, Franklin, and Grant Counties to solicit responses for these questions. These counties had completed decisions, but had not responded to the emailed questions.

All conservancy boards were asked to respond to the following questions for this report.

“ESHB 1832 requires the state Office of Financial Management (OFM) to report to the Legislature on water conservancy boards funding. As part of that report, OFM has asked Ecology to solicit some information from the boards. Please provide your feedback regarding the following:

- a. Has Ecology provided adequate staffing for water conservancy boards to fulfill their responsibilities associated with processing applications? This includes training, technical support, and application processing.
- b. Please explain your answer to question "a".”

The responses provided below are unedited responses from each Board.

### Adams County

Training-while adequate, timing has not always been at the most opportune times  
Technical Support-Personnel changes have resulted in minor delays, however support has been acceptable

Application processing-has been acceptable

Gary De Vore

Benton County – Darryll Olsen’s response to OFM’s phone call. Adequate training, technical assistance and review of decisions. He estimates that Ecology provides a total of 3 staff days to Benton County for technical assistance.

### Chelan County

Yes, the DOE has been extremely supportive of the Chelan County Water Conservancy Board and its operations. Staff always respond in a timely manner to information requests and assist the Board in their understanding of the nuances of the law so that we

may make valid and informed decisions. The DOE has also been very good at keeping the Board informed regarding changes in the law and regulations, and recent court decisions, as they affect the Boards operations, as well as scheduling timely training sessions.

### Douglas County

Yes, DOE has provided adequate training and assistance for the Douglas County Water Conservancy Board. Our questions are answered quickly, either by phone or email. Sufficient training has been provided. The training should be of a useful practical nature - the Commissioners do not want to go to training where they discuss goals and philosophical ideals.

### Ferry County (The response came in the form of a faxed letter)

Dear Janet:

This letter is in response to your request for feedback on Ecology's training, technical support, and processing:

The Department of Ecology has provided us with a wealth of information in training and continues to support the training needs of the water conservancy board. They take great care in selecting training sites located in convenient locations for the board volunteers.

On technical support, the few times I have needed technical support, there has been a wealth of information provided by the Eastern Washington Dept. of Ecology.

Regarding the processing assistance, our small board has yet to process an application for change.

Please feel free to call me if you have any further questions at (509) 779-4434.

Pat Hamilton, Board Chair

Franklin County – Mark Nielson's response to phone call from OFM. Adequate training and application processing. Approximately eight months ago, Ecology's technical assistance response was slow enough to delay processing of applications. Not sure about response time now since Ecology has hired new processing staff.

Grant County – Robert Rolfness' response to phone call from OFM. Adequate training and application processing. Currently, technical assistance requests can take up to one month to be responded to. Five additional water rights processing staff have been hired and should reduce this time delay after they are fully trained.

### Island County

THE ISLAND COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY BOARD IS, IN GENERAL, SATISFIED WITH THE ASSISTANCE IT HAS RECEIVED FROM THE STAFF OF THE DOE, BOTH AT HEADQUARTERS AND IN THE REGION.

THE STAFF REVIEWED A DRAFT ROE THE BOARD PREPARED IN RESPONSE TO A CHANGE APPLICATION FILED BY THE SILVER LAKE WATER CO. THE STAFF MADE SOME SUGGESTED CHANGES WHICH TRIGGERED THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE APPLICANTS ATTORNEY. THE DETAILS WERE NEGOTIATED BETWEEN THE ATTORNEY AND DOE . SOME OF THE DETAILS WERE INCLUDED IN THE BOARDS ROE.

William Attwater

### Klickitat County

Klickitat County Water Conservancy Board (KCWCB) would like to report that the Washington State Department of Ecology has done an excellent job of providing technical, legal and procedural training. The KCWCB works primarily with the Central Regional Office in Yakima Washington, Dan Haller P.E., has been very helpful in providing technical assistance and guidance. The board and staff have received technical and procedural training from Janet Carlson and legal training from Maya Bellen. The board has never been denied information and or assistance when requested. All applications submitted have been processed in a timely manner.

In summery the board is very pleased with the training and assistance received from Washington State Department of Ecology.

Richard T. Beightol

Chairman, Klickitat Water Conservancy Board

Lewis County - No response

Lincoln County - No response

### Mason County

Janet; Sorry for the delay in responding. As the Mason County Board has yet to get formally underway with the processing of applications, we have no way of answering this question. Certainly, in the view of the Mason County Board, the quality of the initial 4-day training provided by Ecology left nothing to be desired. That's the best we can do for you at this time. Happy Holidays!!!

THX: Don Melnick

### Okanogan County

Yes, Ecology has provided all of the technical support our Board has needed. Our board is still in it's creation stage and has not received a formal application as of yet so we have no experience in support for processing applications.

Don Skillingstad

As the Okanogan Co Water Conservancy Board has just finally got organize this month and plans to start receiving application later this month, most of my contact with Ecology has been at the training class which was very good. - Nim Titcomb

### Spokane County

Hi Janet

The Spokane Office of DOE has provided our Board with excellent assistance as needed and has been very supportive.

Doug

Chairman, SCWCB

### Stevens County

In answer to your questions:

- a. Yes. To date, Dept. of Ecology has provided the training and needed materials requested by the Stevens County Water Conservancy Board (SCWCB).
- b. Every time we have called, e-mailed or talked in person with the Dept. of Ecology staff assigned to assist in the Water Conservancy Board Training and Assistance, the Stevens County Water Conservancy Board has received timely responses and the information necessary to complete the tasks involved. Our Board has yet to make a decision on any applications, as we are just now completing our Operating Procedures and Information Fact Sheets to officially open for business. As of December 16, 2002, the Stevens County WCB officially opened for business.

### Thurston County

Short answer is yes. The boards receive adequate training, require CLEs, and receive needed guidance upon request. However, without oversight responsibilities from Ecology, the boards would be severely limited as far as guidance (which would lead to dismay amongst the board, and, thus, stall decisions).

Jon Hare

### Walla Walla County

The Walla Walla board has been provided more than adequate support from the Eastern region office as well as local Walla Walla Ecology staff. We receive timely support for tracking numbers and publication review as well as answers to technical questions. We are very happy with the support we get from the Eastern region office.

Whatcom County - No response

Whitman County

Hello Janet,

I will answer for the Whitman County WCB for this year since I filled out the earlier form.

a)--YES

b)--I was able to get all the information that I needed on a timely basis to do the work of the Board. We were sorry that we could not get a DOE rep. to our meetings, but it wasn't necessary for this year's work. If we have a number of applications to process, then I think it would be important to have a DOE person at the meeting to guide us around some pitfalls that may not be so obvious.

Tracy Eriksen

Kittitas and Yakima County

Well on behalf of the Yakima and Kittitas Counties.

Support from the Department of Ecology has come in different forms. With the addition of Dan Haller, it has been improved, prompt and available either by e-mail, phone or direct contact by my Board members.

Dan responses are always professional and helpful. It would be an added bonus to have a representative at our monthly meetings, but we understand with time commitments that may not be possible.

Yakima and Kittitas are fortunate that the location of the Central Region is located in Yakima.

Sylvia E. Cervantes (NOTE: Sylvia supports both the Yakima and Kittitas County boards.)

Clerk of the Board

Yakima County Water Conservancy Board

Yakima County

As a newly appointed alternate, I was generally pleased with the 32-hour training I received in November, and am looking forward to the January training. Check with me again in next year regarding assistance in processing applications.

Thanks,

Jeff Stevens, Yakima County WCB